United Nations ST/IC/1999/25

Secretariat

26 March 1999

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **1999 competitive examination for English Language Coordinator**

1. The purpose of the present information circular is to invite applications from staff members of the Secretariat at the P-2 level and below who wish to take the competitive examination for English Language Coordinator in 1999, in accordance with the provisions of ST/AI/1998/7 of 23 March 1998. The post of English Language Coordinator has been classified at the P-2 level.

2. A competitive examination for the post of English Language Coordinator will be held on 27 May 1999 in New York, Geneva, Nairobi, Vienna and other locations, according to the number and location of qualified candidates convoked for the examination. The purpose of this examination is to establish a roster from which present and future vacancies for English Language Coordinator in the Staff Development and Learning Service of the Office of Human Resources Management will be filled.

3. The English Language Coordinator is responsible for establishing and administering courses in English language, communications and writing for United Nations and other United Nations agency staff. The coordinator supervises English language teachers, prepares teaching and examination schedules, and ensures that appropriate methodologies are used. Acting as a team leader, the Coordinator creates and maintains an effective team unit, serves as a project facilitator for special pedagogical projects, and initiates, organizes and supervises the work of the teachers assigned to projects. The Coordinator prepares, administers, and supervises language examinations and tests, including the English Language Proficiency Examination. In particular, for the English Language Proficiency Examination, the Coordinator will assist in its design and evaluation, and will ensure test reliability and validity. The Coordinator may be called upon to assist in ensuring the test reliability and validity of other language proficiency examinations. The Coordinator also conducts needs analyses, sets objectives, designs courses and workshops, and develops appropriate materials for courses in English language, communications and writing. The Coordinator is also expected to carry out other staff development activities, whenever called upon to do so.

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 31 July 2000.

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4. The examination is open to staff members of the United Nations at the P-2 level and below, including full-time teachers at Headquarters, Geneva, Nairobi, Vienna and the regional economic commissions who meet the eligibility requirements, as well as qualified external candidates. Staff members from subsidiary organs of the United Nations and staff members whose service is limited to a particular organ, fund or programme of the United Nations or special missions are considered external candidates for the purpose of this examination. Successful candidates are expected to serve a **minimum of two years** in the post. The assignment of staff members of the United Nations who are successful in the examination and are selected to fill vacancies will be subject to the conditions set out in paragraphs 10 to 12 below.

5. Staff members of the Secretariat applying for the examination must:

(a) Have English as their main language;[1]

(b) Hold an advanced university degree (Masters) in language testing, English language teaching methodology, second language acquisition or applied linguistics, with special emphasis on language testing and teaching English as a second or foreign language to adult learners. Preference will be given to candidates who have completed their graduate studies and are preparing a doctorate, or who already hold a doctorate in their field of specialization. An advanced university degree (Masters) in one of the fields mentioned above and five years of continuous language teaching in the United Nations may also be considered. All the degrees should come from a university or equivalent institution at which English is the language of instruction;

(c) Have at least five years' recent combined experience in English language programme management and in English language testing, test reliability and validity issues. This experience should be in programmes for adults who have completed their secondary school diploma, university age students or higher. Also, experience in curriculum development, a background in teacher training and supervision for adult learners, and international experience are preferred;

(d) Proven ability to develop professional writing materials and conduct training workshops in their use;

(e) Good knowledge of word-processing and database applications; proven knowledge of test reliability and validity issues;

(f) Experience designing and teaching courses in communication skills, preferably in a work-related setting, is an advantage;

(g) Experience working with multi-media, video and/or computer-assisted language learning technology is highly desirable;

(h) Knowledge of at least one other official language of the United Nations (Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian or Spanish) is desirable. The Board of Examiners, appointed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, requires that candidates' claims to knowledge of United Nations official languages must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files. Staff members who have been enrolled in a United Nations language course in any of the languages claimed must have passed the United Nations language proficiency examination in that language. Candidates who have not attended the United Nations language courses in the languages claimed must substantiate their claims to knowledge of those languages. For this purpose, staff members should either attach to their application a photocopy of a diploma or a certificate from a language school or a brief explanation of how they acquired their knowledge of the languages claimed. Staff members are advised to submit photocopies, not originals, of such documentation.

6. All applications will be reviewed by the Board of Examiners. All applicants will be notified of the Board's decision in respect of their application. **The Board's decisions are final.**

7. The written examination will consist of the following four parts:

Part 1. Essay questions dealing with second language acquisition, language teaching methodology, language and communications skills training, curriculum course design (two hours). It should be noted that this paper is *eliminatory*. Only candidates who are successful in this paper will have their other papers marked;

Part 2. Practical problem related to teacher supervision and student counselling (30 minutes);

Part 3. Essay question(s) dealing with English language testing (one hour);

Part 4. Essay questions dealing with teacher supervision and observation of language and writing skills courses (one hour).

The use of a dictionary or any other reference material will **not** be permitted during the examination.

8. On the basis of the results of the written examination, the Board of Examiners will invite selected candidates to the second part of the examination, which is projected to take place within six to eight weeks after the written examination. Candidates will be asked to observe and evaluate a language class. The Board will review and discuss with the candidates individually the results of this observation. The candidates will then be placed in small groups, which will be required to perform a specific task. Through this exercise, the candidates' ability to function as part of a team will be evaluated. The Board will then interview the candidates to assess personal qualities, professional experience, knowledge of the United Nations and current events, willingness and adaptability to working conditions in the Staff Development and Learning Service of the Office of Human Resources Management, and the ability to work as a team leader.

9. On the basis of the overall results of the examination, the Board will recommend to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management the names of candidates who qualify for inclusion in the roster. All candidates admitted to the examination will be informed in writing of the Board's final recommendation in respect of their candidature. The Board's recommendations are **not** subject to appeal. The Board **does not** release individual scores/results.

10. Staff members selected to fill vacancies will be assigned as English Language Coordinator for a trial period of two years. Staff members below the P-2 level or who are in the General Service category will receive a special post allowance to the P-2 level. Staff members at the P-2 level will be assigned at the P-2 level.

11. Staff members with a special post allowance to the P-2 level and those already at the P-2 level who complete the trial period successfully and are recommended by the Office of Human Resources Management will be confirmed in their functions of Coordinator at the P-2 level. Staff members who do not complete the trial period successfully will be reassigned to posts at their previous levels and the special post allowance, if any, will be discontinued.

12. In accordance with the needs of the service, successful candidates may be called upon to work outside normal working hours, including weekends and holidays.

13. Staff members applying for the examination should complete the attached form and submit it, **no later than 23 April 1999**, to:

1999 Competitive Examination for Language Coordinator (English)
Examinations and Tests Section
Specialist Services Division
Office for Human Resources Management
Room S-2590-A
United Nations Secretariat
New York, N.Y. 10017
Fax: (212) 963-3683

Applications received after the above deadline will not be considered. Applications must be sent by mail or faxed. No applications sent electronically will be considered.

14. In order to ensure receipt of all applications submitted by staff members from offices away from Headquarters, these staff members are requested to return their applications directly to the Examinations and Tests Section, Specialist Services Division, Office for Human Resources Management, through the Chief Administrative Officer or Director of the United Nations information centre of their respective duty stations before 23 April 1999, the deadline for receipt of applications in the Specialist Services Division.

15. Only those candidates who are invited to sit for the examination will receive the detailed schedule of the examination to which they are convoked. This information will be attached to the candidate's letter of convocation.

Notes

[1] "Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to teach; candidates' claims to English as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

Application

1999 competitive examination for English Language Coordinator[1]

Index No.[2]

Last name Category Level

First name Sex: Male Female

Date of entry on duty: Month Year 19

Type of contract: Expiration date:

Department/office:[3] Duty station:

Room No. Tel. extension Fax extension E-mail

Have you taken this examination before? Yes in 19 No

Have you taken another United Nations competitive examination? Yes in 19 No

If yes, which examination(s)?

What is your main language?[4]

A. University degree(s) or equivalent or post-secondary educational qualifications[5]

Name of institution, place and country	*Language of instruction*	*Attended from/to*		*Degree[6] or equivalent*	*Main field of study*
		month/year	*month/year*		

B. Describe your work experience (giving dates and length of time) in English language testing, English language teacher supervision, curriculum development, communication and writing skills training for adult learners. Also, indicate any international experience you may have

C. Indicate your experience using computers for language testing, programme development and teaching

D. Knowledge of other languages[6]

Language(s)	*United Nations language programme (highest level and date)*	*Courses taken at other institutions (name and location)*

E. Indicate your ability in each of the languages mentioned in section D above

	Read		*Understand*		*Speak*		*Write*	
Language	*Easily*	*Not easily*	*Easily*	*Not easily*	*Fluently*	*Not fluently*	*Easily*	*Not easily*

I certify that the information I have provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

I have read information circular ST/IC/1999/25, and I understand that if I am successful in the 1999 competitive examination for English Language Coordinator and recommended for inclusion in the roster, my assignment as an English Language Coordinator will be subject to my acceptance of the conditions of service indicated in paragraphs 10 to 12 of that circular.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Notes

[1] Staff members applying for this examination **must complete this section.** In addition, staff members **must attach** written proof of claimed secondary educational qualifications from establishments at which English is the principal language of instruction. Written proof of claimed post-secondary education must also be attached unless they were convoked for the G-to-P examination for promotion to the Professional category or another language examination. Applications that are incomplete or do not include essential information or documentation will be returned to the staff member **for completion and resubmission within the deadline for receipt of applications** to the Examinations and Tests Section of the Specialist Services Division, Office for Human Resources Management. Extensions for receipt of applications in the Examinations and Tests Section of the Specialist Services Division will **not** be granted. Therefore, staff members are advised to submit their applications without delay.

[2] Normally appears on your monthly salary statement and personnel action (P-5) forms; if it does not, please contact your Human Resources Management Officer to obtain your number.

[3] Please indicate Department/Office, e.g., DGAACS, OCS, ECE, UNCTAD, UNOG, UNOV or other (specify).

[4] "Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to work; candidates' claims to English as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

[5] Give exact name and title in original language, do not translate or equate.

[6] Candidates are reminded that they must submit relevant documentation to substantiate their claims, as appropriate, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 5 (h) of the present information circular.